

Deuteronomy 29 - Thursday, December 22nd, 2011

(1) These *are* the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He made with them in Horeb.

- Moses rounds a corner from telling them what would happen if they turned their backs on the Lord, to what happens if they returned to the Lord.
- Actually, both chapter twenty-nine and thirty are a reaffirming of the covenant, which was made when the previous generation was at Mt. Sinai.
- The thought is that God has Moses preach this for the benefit of those who were either not born yet, or were still very young, forty years prior.

(2) Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land— (3) the great trials which your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great wonders. (4) Yet the LORD has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this *very* day.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that regardless of what they saw God do, for them, seeing wasn't believing.
- If you really stop and think about it, what they saw was, by any stretch of the imagination, were the most amazing miracles one could ever see.
- Yet, what they saw with their eyes did not make a difference in their hearts. Only God can do that, and He does, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

John 6:63-66 NIV The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. (64) Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. (65) He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him." (66) From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

John 12:37 NIV Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him.

(5) And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet. (6) You have not eaten bread, nor have you drunk wine or *similar* drink, that you may know that I *am* the LORD your God.

- It's important to note how often times, like we see here with their clothes and sandals not wearing out, God's miracles are found in the practical.
- I believe this speaks to how prone we are to miss God's miracles when we're looking for them in all the wrong places, expecting the spectacular.
- Perhaps one of the reasons we do this is because we take the little things in our mundane day-to-day lives for granted, even expecting them.

(7) And when you came to this place, Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan came out against us to battle, and we conquered them.

- I wanted to unpack this verse separately from the others because there's something in it that isn't very easy to notice just at the first read of it.
- What I mean is, this is just one verse that tells of what God did for the Israelites, but to the Israelites at the time, it was a matter of life and death.
- In other words, this battle against these two kings Sihon of Heshbon and Og of Bashan was terrifying to them until God gave the victory to them.

(8) We took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh. (9) Therefore keep the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do.

- It's been said that whenever you see the word; "therefore" in scripture, it's because it's therefore a reason, and this one is certainly no exception.
- These miracles from God are therefore them to remember all He's done, therefore their response is obedience to God for all that He has done.
- Also, notice how it's so that God may be able to prosper them in all that they do as well. Make no mistake about it God desires to prosper us.

(10) "All of you stand today before the LORD your God: your leaders and your tribes and your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel, (11) your little ones and your wives—also the stranger who *is* in your camp, from the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water— (12) that you may enter into covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath, which the LORD your God makes with you today, (13) that He may establish you today as a people for Himself, and *that* He may be God to you, just as He has spoken to you, and just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (14) "I make this covenant and this oath, not with you alone, (15) but with *him* who stands here with us today before the LORD our God, as well as with *him* who *is* not here with us today

- Here, Moses is saying that this covenant was not just for all of them standing there that day, but it was also for their future generations as well.
- Now, here's a question; why would Moses need to include this in his sermon? I believe God has him communicate this in order to humble them.
- Here's what I'm thinking, God knows that they, like us, would've become heady about being "the" ones who were actually there at this time.

(16) (for you know that we dwelt in the land of Egypt and that we came through the nations which you passed by, (17) and you saw their abominations and their idols which *were* among them—wood and stone and silver and gold); (18) so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go *and* serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood;

- This is yet another passage here in this chapter that has more to it than meets the eye at first glance. Notice, how it's a root bearing bitterness.
- This would seem to indicate that those living in Egypt, a type of living for the world, would only end up living a life of bitterness and emptiness.
- Turning your heart away from God to serve other gods may seem pleasurable for a season, but in the end it will only lead to a bitter emptiness.

Hebrews 11:24-27 KJV By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; (25) Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; (26) Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. (27) By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

Proverbs 5:3-5 KJV For the lips of a strange woman drop *as* an honeycomb, and her mouth *is* smoother than oil: (4) But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword. (5) Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

(19) and so it may not happen, when he hears the words of this curse, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates of my heart'—as though the drunkard could be included with the sober. (20) "The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the LORD would blot out his name from under heaven. (21) And the LORD would separate him from all the tribes of Israel for adversity, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this Book of the Law, (22) so that the coming generation of your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, would say, when they see the plagues of that land and the sicknesses which the LORD has laid on it: (23) 'The whole land *is* brimstone, salt, and burning; it is not sown, nor does it bear, nor does any grass grow there, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and His wrath.'

- As it would end up, this passage would be prophetic, in that they would do exactly this both as Israelites individually, and a nation collectively.
- Basically, this speaks to those who think that they could get away with living their lives for the world, and living their lives for their own pleasure.
- The consequences of doing this would carry with it such far reaching ramifications that Israel would be plagued with unspeakable barrenness.

(24) All nations would say, 'Why has the LORD done so to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?' (25) Then *people* would say: 'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt; (26) for they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they did not know and that He had not given to them. (27) Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against this land, to bring on it every curse that is written in this book. (28) And the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger, in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as *it is* this day.' (29) "The secret *things belong* to the LORD our God, but those *things which are* revealed *belong* to us and to our children forever, that *we* may do all the words of this law.

- Here, Moses is saying that the barrenness would be so bad, that future generations would wonder what the reason was for God's great anger.
- I would suggest that this is God's way of teaching them to learn from the previous generations mistakes, so as to not have this happen to them.
- Perhaps you'll indulge me for the remainder of our time, as I sense the Holy Spirit would desire to draw our attention to a number of life lessons.

LIFE LESSON #1: God wants us walking in obedience to Him more than even we ourselves do, as evidenced by this and the next chapter.

LIFE LESSON #2: Seeing is not believing unless we have the "how" of the Holy Spirit, to believe the "what" of the Holy Word.

LIFE LESSON #3: If we're only looking for the fingerprints of God's miracles in the spectacular, we'll miss them in the practical.

LIFE LESSON #4: No matter what you're going through, you can still have the confidence that God will get you through.

LIFE LESSON #5: Guard your heart against the heady pride that comes from thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought.

LIFE LESSON #6: If I drink from the cup of pleasure the world has to offer, not only will I thirst again I will become bitter in the end.

LIFE LESSON #7: Never fancy yourself as being able to live for yourself and defy God, because to do so will be to your own peril.

LIFE LESSON #8: Learn from the mistakes of others so that you yourself don't suffer the same fate needlessly.